

What is claimed is:

1. A rail vehicle, comprising:
a vehicle head, including a driver compartment;
and
a car body including a passenger compartment,
wherein the vehicle head is embodied as a self-supporting unit, and wherein shock absorbing elements, which operate in a telescopic fashion and which absorb energy occurring during a collision, are arranged underneath the vehicle head.
2. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 1, wherein the shock absorbing elements include at least one of a reversible step and a nonreversible step.
3. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 1, wherein the shock absorbing elements are covered by a front panel.
4. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 1, wherein the vehicle head is equipped, as a mechanically premounted and electrically pretested assembly, with corresponding components.
5. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 4, wherein the vehicle head includes a driver outer door.
6. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 1, wherein the rail vehicle is a lightweight motor car.
7. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 2, wherein the shock absorbing elements are covered by a front panel.

8. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 4, wherein the vehicle head is equipped with at least one of a seat and a console.

9. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 2, wherein the vehicle head is equipped, as a mechanically premounted and electrically pretested assembly, with corresponding components.

10. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 3, wherein the vehicle head is equipped, as a mechanically premounted and electrically pretested assembly, with corresponding components.

11. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 7, wherein the vehicle head is equipped, as a mechanically premounted and electrically pretested assembly, with corresponding components.

12. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 9, wherein the vehicle head is equipped with at least one of a seat and a console.

13. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 10, wherein the vehicle head is equipped with at least one of a seat and a console.

14. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 11, wherein the vehicle head is equipped with at least one of a seat and a console.

15. A rail vehicle, comprising:
a first portion including a first compartment;
a second portion including a second compartment;
and

a plurality of shock absorbing elements, arranged beneath the vehicle head and adapted to operate in a telescopic fashion to absorb energy from a collision.

16. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 15, wherein the shock absorbing elements include at least one of a reversible step and a nonreversible step.

17. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 15, wherein the shock absorbing elements are covered by a front panel.

18. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 15, wherein the first portion is equipped, as a mechanically premounted and electrically pretested assembly, with corresponding components.

19. A rail vehicle, comprising:

a first portion including a first compartment;
a second portion including a second compartment;

and

means, arranged beneath the vehicle head, for operating in a telescopic fashion to absorb energy from a collision.

20. The rail vehicle as claimed in claim 19, wherein the means include at least one of a reversible step and a nonreversible step.